element of the overall bilateral relationship of the two countries and all efforts will be made to enhance and deepen this cooperation. It was also agreed that the ongoing dialogue on defence, politico-military and security issues between the Ministries of Defence of India and France would be continued in a systematic and regular manner through the Indo-French High Committee on Defence Cooperation already in existence.

(b) No, Sir.

AIDS among Defence personnel

2336. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATl VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Army's Directorate General of Medical Services has brought out a handbook on AIDS;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to prevent spread of AIDS amongst Defence personnel; and

(c) the expenditure incurred on AIDS control during 1996-97, 1997-98 and the allocation for 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) A book titled as "Commanders' hand book on AIDS" has been prepared by Armed Forces Medical College, Pune and the same was mass produced by Directorate General of Medical Services (Army).

The following steps are being taken to prevent the spread of AIDS among Defence personnel:—

(a) IEC (Information, Education and Communication synonymous with Health Education) activities on prevention and control of HIV/AIDS have been stepped up in the Armed Forces. These IEC activities are undertaken by medical, nursing and paramedical staff and also by commanders at all levels and religious teachers. A video film was developed by the Armed Forces Medical College, highlighting the causes and prevention of HIV/AIDS in the Armed Forces Personnel and has been distributed to all Units in the Army.

(b) Only HIV infection free Blood is used for transfusion to service personnel and their families.

(c) Condoms are made available freely in the units for service personnel.

(d) Service personnel found sero positive for HIV are examined frequently and preventive measures are being taken against the spread of infection.

The expenditure on the control of HIV/AIDS is met from the consolidated Budgetary provision made available to the Armed Forces Medical Services for providing comprehensive health care facilities to service personnel and their families. In addition, following grant in aid for surveillance of HIV/AIDS have been provided by National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Year	Amount (in Rs.)
1996-97	Nil
1997-98	15,24,500.00
1998-99	13,61,000.00

Representation of the Chiefs of Staffs Committee

2337. SHRI JIBON ROY:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Minister of Defence had received a representation from the Chiefs of Staffs Committee stating the difficulties the Committee was facing because of the role of the then Defence Secretary, after having failed to meet him for the preceding four days;

(b) if so, the reasons for the failure of the Defence Minister to meet the Service Chiefs for four days; and

(c) the response of Government to the contents of the representation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) A representation was received. However, at no time has the access of the three Chiefs of the Staff to the Defence Minister been restricted or curtailed in any way even during the days